

INDEXA



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Daily Information Session—14.236 @ 23:30Z

H40AA—Temotu Islands *by Wayne Mills, N7NG*

DXpeditioners are always looking for new entities. As early as 1989, investigation was underway to determine the potential country status of the Santa Cruz Islands in the Solomons.

While living in California and working on his book, Martti Laine, OH2BH, was also looking for more DX. A location in the Pacific would be ideal. In addition to the possibility of making Jarvis Island (AH3C/KH5J) a "new one," there was a real possibility for the Santa Cruz Islands. Several sources were consulted and for a time it appeared that the distance would just make the 225 miles needed to qualify. Then, finally, official information from the Solomon Islands indicated that the distance might fall a little short. Not wishing to create undue controversy the project was put on the shelf. Perhaps movement of the continental plates would move the Santa Cruz Islands a bit further for a future DXCC counter!

Change is in the wind

When the ARRL Board of Directors announced in January, 1998, that the new rules would be implemented at the end of March, many DXers started examining the new criteria for possibilities of new DXCC entities.

One significant change was that the distance measurements had been converted to the more universal metric system. For distances between Parents and Island Groups,

the distance became 350 km where it had been 225 miles in the past. It turns out that 350 km is approximately 217.5 miles. Noticing this, Tim, N4GN, announced to Martti that the Santa Cruz Islands would likely count as a "new one" as of the end of March.

Geography

The eastern province of the Solomon Islands is called the Temotu Province. The Temotu Province is made up of the Santa Cruz Islands, the Reef Islands, and the Duff Islands. The island from which we would operate is called "Nendo" and is one of the Santa Cruz Islands. All of these groups comprise the Temotu Province and all will count as the Temotu Islands DXCC Entity.

Swift preparations

Preparation time was short but because preliminary investigations were completed nine years earlier, it was a simple matter to make a quick decision. After a quick check of resources, plans began to take shape for a DXpedition to the Santa Cruz Islands.

INDEXA and the NCDXF agreed to



Wayne, N7NG, operating as H40AA.

generous amounts of support.

Pekka, OH1RY, already had plans to operate the SSB WPX Contest from the Solomons. This provided the opportunity to move equipment and find accommodations prior to the arrival of the main group of operators. Pekka located a fine facility, the Luelta Resort, for the contest and expedition, and when the operators arrived, much of the preparation was done.

A large scale operation needs considerable space in order to separate stations and provide as much operating flexibility as possible. Because the Luelta Resort was limited in size, we decided to cover a two-week time period with two "waves" of operators.

We weren't sure of the available utili-

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Aki, JA5DQH

ties at the site so we decided to provide for equipment transportation such as generators, etc. We supplemented the regular transportation of two commercial flights per week with two, round-trip charter flights. The charters gave us the opportunity to carry additional equipment as well as shuttle operators with more flexibility.

Operator rotation

Pekka, OH1RY, and his wife, Taina, arrived more than a week in advance of the beginning of the operation.

On Wednesday, April 1st, the "first wave" operators began arriving: Martti, OH2BH, and Leena, OH2BE; Pekka, OH2TA; Wayne, N7NG; and Aki, JA5DQH.

One station with many antennas was already in operation and at 2359z on March 31, 1998, the operation of H40AA began. Later that day, a second CW station was constructed and two stations were up and running full time. During the first 24 hours we made 8,000 QSOs.

Martti, Leena, and Pekka, OH2TA, left for home the following Monday and we were joined by James, 9V1YC, and Olli, OH0XX.

On Wednesday, Aki headed home and was replaced by Bruce, W6OSP.

Finally, on Monday the 13th, those remaining until the end left the island.

Operational strategy

For the first six days, a heavy emphasis was placed on SSB and CW on as few bands as practical. Fifteen meters was excellent and we continued to emphasize this band throughout the first weekend. (Actually, throughout the whole effort, conditions on all bands were excellent. We regularly worked east coast USA on 12 and 10 meters late into their evening.) During

this phase we logged over 17,000 different callsigns. Even though the dupe rate was higher than usual, our strategy gave many DXers their first chance for a new one.

Antennas and equipment

During his off hours before the arrival of the remainder of the group, Pekka, OH1RY, made contact with Mr. Ashley Wilson, a VSA volunteer who had lived on the island for nine months. Ashley agreed to let us use his house, located about one kilometer from the Luelta Resort. This allowed us more opportunity to operate the same bands and we decided to set-up the CW location there.

We installed a large variety of antennas. At the Luelta, we had a tribander, a WARC beam, and vertical dipoles for 40 and 80. At Ashley's house, we had a 15 meter monobander, an R-7000 by Cushcraft, dipoles for 10, 20, and 40, and "Aki Specials" for 80 and 160.

Equipment included four FT-1000MPs, two Alpha amplifiers, one

FinnFet amp, and one FT900.

For topband, the Aki Special proved effective. Receiving was not the problem it had been for other DXpeditions in the recent past. Our difficulty on 160 meters was that stateside noise levels were much greater than ours. Our topband noise level was consistently S2 to S4—seldom greater. We had no difficulty hearing.

Breaking new ground

During off hours, several of us had the unique opportunity to visit at length with Ashley Wilson. We learned quite a bit about the residents of Nendo and the Temotu Development Agency, a Solomon Islands agency that helps create jobs and commerce for the islands of the province.



It's a tough job but somebody's gotta do it!
(l-r: Taina, OH1RY XYL; Aki, JA5DQH; Martti, OH2BH; Pekka, OH2TA; and Pekka, OH1RY)

Through our discussions we learned that past donations subsidized the purchase of power tools for local craftsmen. The community was still in need of a covered area for a "market," and Ashley indicated that USD 2,500 might be enough to construct such a facility.

Realizing that our group was in a unique position to assist the people Nendo, Martti devised another "new one"—a special, commemorative QSL card that would be available for a contribution of \$25 to the TDA. Esti-

New phone/FAX for President, W4WMQ

mating a demand for 100 cards, the goal was to donate \$2,500 to the local folks. In the end, over 430 contributors volunteered over \$20,000 to the cause. Included in this amount was a \$10,000 contribution from Lee Shaklee, W6BH, who was in the area during WWII.

We are continuing to cooperate with Ashely in order to distribute the contributions appropriately and work is already underway to design useful projects for the Lata community.

As of this writing, the special QSLs have been mailed and received by contributors. Regular QSLs have been printed and mailed as well.

It's official! A "new one" is born.

The ARRL Awards Committee accepted the recommendation of the ARRL DX Advisory Committee to add the Temotu Province of the Solomon Islands to the DXCC List. The addition is effective with contacts beginning at 2359 UTC on March 31, 1998.

In order to give all DXers worldwide an equal chance to submit their cards for DXCC/Honor Roll listing, no cards were accepted before October, 1998.

Thanks to our supporters

The entire group of H40AA operators wishes to thank all DXers for their cooperation in the presentation of this new one.

Considering this is a new entity, the crowds were especially well-behaved. The Japanese were well-disciplined, as usual. The Europeans were pleasantly chaotic, and the Americans were very efficient. For this we thank you all!

We would also like to thank INDEXA and the NCDXF for their up-front assistance. Their funding made it unnecessary for us to solicit support from the DXing public.

We also thank Alpha Power, FinnFet, and Yaesu.

In addition, we extend a special thank you to those who contributed to the special TDA fund. This project is indeed a new dimension in DXing.

On 31 December 1998, INDEXA's president, Murphy, W4WMQ, will retire from his "other job" at the Rock Hill Telephone Company after forty-six years of dedicated service.

As of December 31st, please disregard the following numbers:

Phone: (803) 324-6130

FAX: (803) 324-7259

Effective December 31st, you can contact Murphy daily between 1200 and 2300 UTC at:

Phone: (803) 366-9057

FAX: (803) 325-2121

Continue to address e-mail correspondence to:

INDEXA@rhtc.net

Note: Telecommunications will lose not one, but two communications specialists. INDEXA's secretary-treasurer, Bill Jennings, W4UNP, is also retiring from the telephone company on December 31st, 1998. Effective 1 January 1999, you will no longer be able to reach Bill at <Jennings@rhtelco.com>. His new e-mail address will be: W4UNP@rhtc.net.

Please continue to send membership inquiries, applications, donations, and requests for tee shirts or rubber stamps to Bill Jennings, W4UNP, Secretary-Treasurer, Post Office Box 607, Rock-Hill, SC 29731 USA.

New Life Members.....

N9JH,	WA4FFW,	DL2AYJ,	KG6OK,	G3NOH,
AG8L,	and,	K5QM		

Extra Help Provided By.....

W5VCS,	Y. Suzuki,	WP3A,	AB7RW,	K5SLW,
N0ZA,	W7GSW,	N3AE,	XE1ZLW,	DL2AYJ,
DJ9ZB,	JH6QFJ,	NJ5S,	WB2O,	W6JNX,
G3NOH,	PY2CC,	AA7AV,	WA8OIK,	LA8CJ,
VE3IQ,	KA2PHQ,	W4USW,	AE2N,	KB7V,
W6VTK,	PT2FR,	KK5UY,	and,	KB8VZS

QSL Man W4MPY goes metric

Serious DXers face a variety of challenges but mail theft in many countries of the world is a problem that effects us all.

How many times have you experienced problems with envelopes when submitting QSL requests to foreign managers?

As DXers, we send QSL cards, green stamps, and IRCs that often fail to reach their destinations.

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Monetta, SC 29105 U.S.A.**

Donald T. Atkinson, J37AH—SK

With deep sadness and regret, INDEXA announces the passing of a member and fellow DXer. We believe the words of his son best express the feelings of all.

September 9, 1998

Dear Sir/Madam:

Please be advised that my father, Donald T. Atkinson, J37AH, formerly of 1573 Sunshine Avenue SE, Port St. Lucie, Florida, deceased on December 20, 1997,

in Stuart, Florida. His wife, Barbara, deceased four months prior on August 17, 1997, in Port St. Lucie.

My father was a passionately active ham during his twenty years in Grenada, West Indies, until 1991 and was especially instrumental during the American intervention on the island in the 1980s.

Cordially yours,
Robert B. Atkinson

1998-1999

Election Results

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Secretary-Treasurer:	W4UNP*
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	LA8CJ
	VK6RU
	ZL1AMO*
	DJ9ZB*
Vice-Directors:	WA9AVN
	W8BLA

* Newly Elected
** Newly Elected Chairman

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